PLAY METER

UPDATE EDITION

Vol. 5, No. 16 **September 1, 1979**

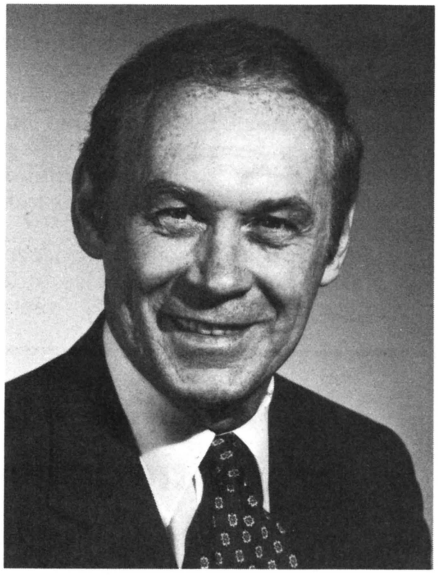
Hughes is new Xcor chief

James J. Hughes has been named president of Xcor International, the parent company of Williams Electronics. The appointment was effective July 31, and sent Hughes to the president's chair from his position as chief operating officer for the conglomerate.

Aside from Williams, the Xcor family includes Choice Vend, King Musical Instruments, Qualitone (hearing aid manufacturing), and The Front Row Theatre.

Hughes has been with Xcor since 1965 and has served in various executive capacities. He is a member of the board of directors and the executive committee.

In making the announcement, Louis J. Nicastro, chairman of the board, stated: "This appointment recognizes the extraordinary executive skills demonstrated by Mr. Hughes as chief operating officer, and his efforts in our company's return to profitability."



James J. Hughes

Xcor's profitability soared in 1978 as revenues rose from $104 million in 1977 to $123 million. The company's net income was significantly improved, as 1977's $1,649,000 loss was turned into a $5,412,000 gain in 1978. The company assets are listed at slightly more than $68 million.

Choice Vend and Williams were responsible for the major portion of the revenue increase as they achieved significant unit sales gains during the year.

Xcor offers that *Flash* has best dramatized Williams' capabilities in creativity, engineering, design know-how, quality control, and psychological input.

Excessive taxation lethal to Louisiana operators

In a state famous for its governmental expenses, Louisiana operators carry some of the heaviest tax burdens in the nation.

Consider a New Orleans operator who pays a thousand dollars to the city for the privilege to do business there. Then, for each game he buys from his distributor—or wherever else he gets his games—he must pay $90 to $125 in sales or—if he finds his way around that—use tax.

So now our New Orleans operator is ready to do business? Not so. The state license fee must be paid for each game. Another fifty bucks. And the city isn't through yet. Another fifty dollar license fee per game. (And don't forget to stick those licenses somewhere on the game and hope they don't get ripped off.)

But now he's off and running, right? Wrong, amusement tax breath. Ten dollars, and not so amusing.

Finally, to the location to set up games for fun and profit.

The bar owner is in a great mood today. (Why not? The operator has just paid all the taxes on a machine that the bar owner will take fifty percent of the revenues from.) The two businessmen trade cliches about how well the Saints' new offensive linemen are offending, and "See y'all later" out the door to confront the smiling state revenue man, hand out, reminding our operator to pay, and promptly, his personal property tax (about twenty dollars a game).

The scene is not altogether peculiar to New Orleans, even if the Saints are. Across the nation, excessive licensing and tax structures are absorbing operators' profits. In the August 15 "State of the Industry/Buyer's Guide" issue, PLAY METER will feature a complete breakdown on license and tax requirements in all fifty states.

Operators are also trying to do something about absurd taxation regulations. In Louisiana, a bill was presented in the last session of the legislature which would allow operators to pay on the receipts of their games. This tax would replace the multiple licensing and tax regulations currently enveloping the industry there. In spite of having the support of the Department of Revenue, this bill was defeated by a small margin, though its chances of passing next year are estimated as good.

Vol. 5, No. 16
September 1, 1979

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Music Hire gets in on TS foreign expansion

"We are most impressed by the Tournament Soccer package and the organization that goes with it, and we think it has a big future in this country." So stated John Farrand as his company, Music Hire, signed to distribute TS tables in England.

"The whole Tournament Soccer package is all about marketing," Farrand continued. "The fact that it happens to be attached to a football table is somewhat irrelevant.

"The package is something that gives the average pub customer entertainment with the prospect of taking part in national competitions at a later stage, but at the same time it is actively promoted within the pub itself and this is what the landlords and the breweries are anxious to find at the moment."

And so Tournament Soccer is making good on its promise to take England by storm this season. Earlier, Cal Rogers and Lee Peppard of TS had reached an agreement with England's Alca Electronics to be that nation's TS distributor.

Alca, under the direction of Michael Green (Coinman, PLAY METER, August 15), arranged for Music Hire to promote the game "aggressively" in locations, in the same style with which TS has been so successful in this country.

Green noted Alca's existing relationship with Music Hire, which handles some of Alca's own manufactured pieces, and added: "Tournament Soccer is a line that, because of its promotion, needs to be handled by highly sophisticated companies with the administrative back-up to provide customers with the right kind of service. For that reason we have to be very selective about who sells the game; but we have no worries about Music Hire's abilities at all."

Virginia operators hassled by negative interpretation

The Amusement and Music Operators of Virginia are fighting a battle of legal semantics with the Virginia attorney general's office. The controversey surrounds interpretation of the gross receipts tax section of the current Virginia Tax Code.

Under the code, localities are allowed to assess a gross receipts tax on the coin machine industry. The understanding when the law was passed was that the gross receipts would refer to the amount *actually* received by the operator, but on October 19, 1978, the attorney general rendered an opinion to the commissioner of the revenue of Franklin County, Virginia that the gross receipts would include "the entire amount of the proceeds from the coin-operated machine prior to dividing such amount with the businessman."

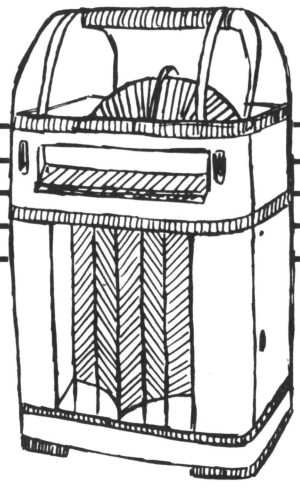
Of course, the AMOV objects, finding it "inconceivable" that the language of the law suggests that operators are subject to taxation on the full amount of cash box collections. Through Virginia State Senator Bateman, the AMOV is questioning the interpretation by citing conditions as previous contracts existing prior to division of gross receipts, double taxation of gross receipts (location owners must pay taxes on their share), and the exercise of control of the contents of cash boxes by the location prior to division.

In an effort to clear the matter and effectively reverse the attorney general's opinion, Senator Hopkins of Roanoke proposed to amend the language of the section by inserting the words "only on the share of the receipts actually received by the operator." Unfortunately, the amendment was shuffled aside somehow and never reached the governor for signature, although it had been introduced and included as an amendment to another House bill. No one can determine exactly why the amendment was not passed and the AMOV is miffed. "How it got deleted in final passage is mysterious."

Presently, the AMOV plays a waiting game (until the 1980 General Assembly convenes, when, the AMOV hopes,) the amendment can be introduced again and "should not be met with serious objection."

MUSIC PROGRAMMING

By Pat Matthews
WQUE New Orleans



Tuning in

The recent weeks have brought another tragic departure from the music world. I guess the list will always continue to grow, but I find myself asking, why *now*? Though the lady remained relatively obscure in her last years, Minnie Ripperton's music touched the world deeply and with great sensitivity, and her vocal perception will leave her as one of the enduring talents of this era. We at PLAY METER express our deepest condolences to her widower and her children. We will miss her multi-octave voice which always served to heal the hurt.

DIFFERENT WORLDS—Maureen McGovern—Warner Brothers WBX 8835

It's the theme song to one of the few successful new TV shows of this past season. I watched the show a couple of times early in the year and always liked the theme, much the same as I felt about the themes from "Happy Days" and its spinoff, "Laverne & Shirley." This one, like most television opuses, is a bright, happy, upbeat tune with excellent vocals by Ms. McGovern who is resurfacing after her singing career went down with the *S.S. Poseidon*. "Different Worlds" has a disco flavor and is a short tune (only 2:15). Should sell briskly wherever "Angie" is shown and loved. Give it a 7 out of 10.

LOVE ME NOW—Ronnie McDowell—Epic 9-50753

Remember "The King Is Gone," the tribute to Elvis? Well, this is from the same performer who sang that one. This one is a dreamy country ballad about being in the peak of one's life for giving love. It is, of course, a love song, just full of lush strings and soft steel guitars, and pleasant. Should do well at the truckstops and all night diners. And as far as the radio charts are concerned, I believe it's a sure 9 out of 10 country.

SAIL ON—Commodores—Motown M 1466F

Are you ready for a record from a super group, with a string of successes, that doesn't sound all that much like their previous work? Well, here it is. The alteration doesn't mean it's not a good tune! As a matter of fact, it's GREAT! The versatility of the Commodores is very much in evidence here. It's a ballad reminiscent of Seals and Crofts, Pure Prairie League. The vocals are the highlight throughout. You've got to hear this one to believe it. And you no doubt will, since it's an instant radio "add" everywhere. Give it a 9 out of 10.

MUST HAVE BEEN CRAZY—Chicago—Columbia 1-11061

That's right! It's that time of year again! Time for another Chicago album! I know all the dyed-in-the-wool Chicago freaks will be happy about that. However, the single may surprise you. It's not typical Chicago, but there is an obvious reason for this somewhat different sound. It's written by Donnie "Hot Licks" Dacus, the newest member of this super bunch of musicians. As his nickname suggests, he's the guitarist, and in this tune he squeezes out some nice licks. The song is a mid-tempo rocker and could fare well. But I don't think this single will sell as well as the LP. Give it a 7 out of 10 and hope for better results. (You know I could end up sayin' I "Must Have Been Crazy!")

WE CAN'T STAY LIKE THIS FOREVER—Roger Voudouris—Warner Brothers WBS 49021

It starts out sounding like the old BTO song "You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet" but soon evolves into a disco chorus. The body of the tune *is* still reminiscent of vintage Bachman-Turner. Roger earned his due with his first effort "Get Used To It," and should carry forward with this strong driving number that relies heavily on a disco sound. It ends abruptly, but not before it achieves being very infectious. Rate it an 8 out of 10 or better.

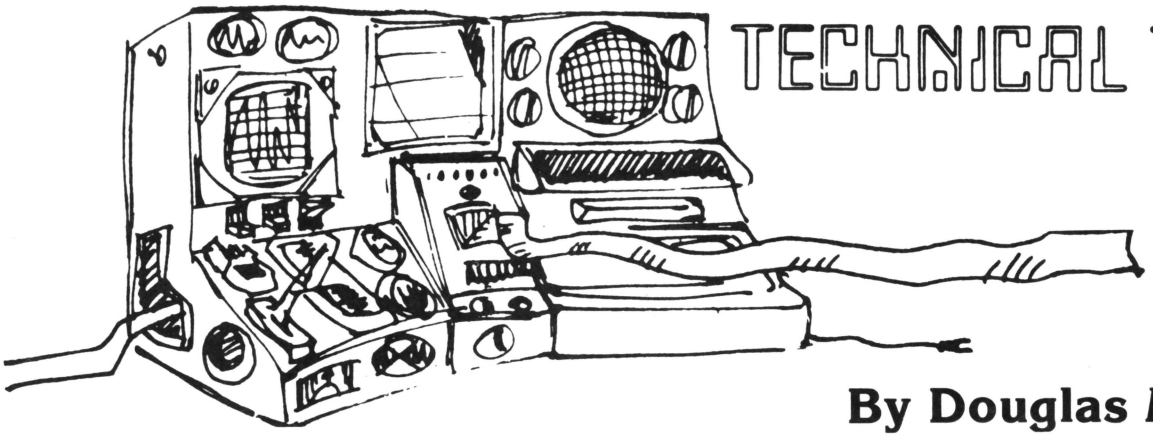
AIN'T THAT A SHAME—Cheap Trick—Epic 9-50743

It's another rocker from the "Live At Budokan" LP, replete with Japanese squeals of femininity (again). New Orleans' own Dave Bartholomew and Antoine "Fats" Domino wrote this one way back when. Fats enjoyed tremendous success in the early sixties with this tune. And now Cheap Trick has electrified this simple three chord tune proving once again that rock and roll has deeply entrenched roots. It's being given a big push and should do very well, especially in the Midwest, New Orleans, and Japan. Try a 7 out of 10.

LOST IN MUSIC—Sister Sledge—Cotillion 45001

Here's another from the apparently unending catalog of smash hit records from the Chic organization, headed up by the incomparable song writing team of Nile Rodgers and Bernard Edwards. It's the third single culled from the Sledge Sisters' "We Are Family" LP. The beat is a danceable one, natch, and the guitars are easy and flowing and very Chic. Should do great in the discos and almost as well on the radio charts...8 out of 10.

The records are rated as follows: 10 out of 10 = Top 10 peak; 9 out of 10 = Top 20 peak; 8 out of 10 = Top 30 peak; 7 out of 10 = Top 40 peak; 5 or 6 out of 10 = Somewhere in Top 100; 4 or less = Forget it, loser, break in half.



By Douglas McCallum

Clearing away monitor problems

We find ourselves with more and more video equipment these days, and, in many spots, the arcades especially, these games are the main source of revenue (*Space Invaders*, geez!!). So now more than ever, it's important to keep these games up.

Let's look at monitors. They're fairly reliable and most failures can be lumped into certain categories.

By far the vast majority of our monitors are Motorola's. Motorola makes a really good product in my estimation. There are basically two types in use: the older type with the *plug-in* PCB (models XM501/701), and the newer type with most of the parts *on* the PCB (XM5000/7000). Model numbers starting with five have 19-inch screens and those with 7 have a 23-inch screen.

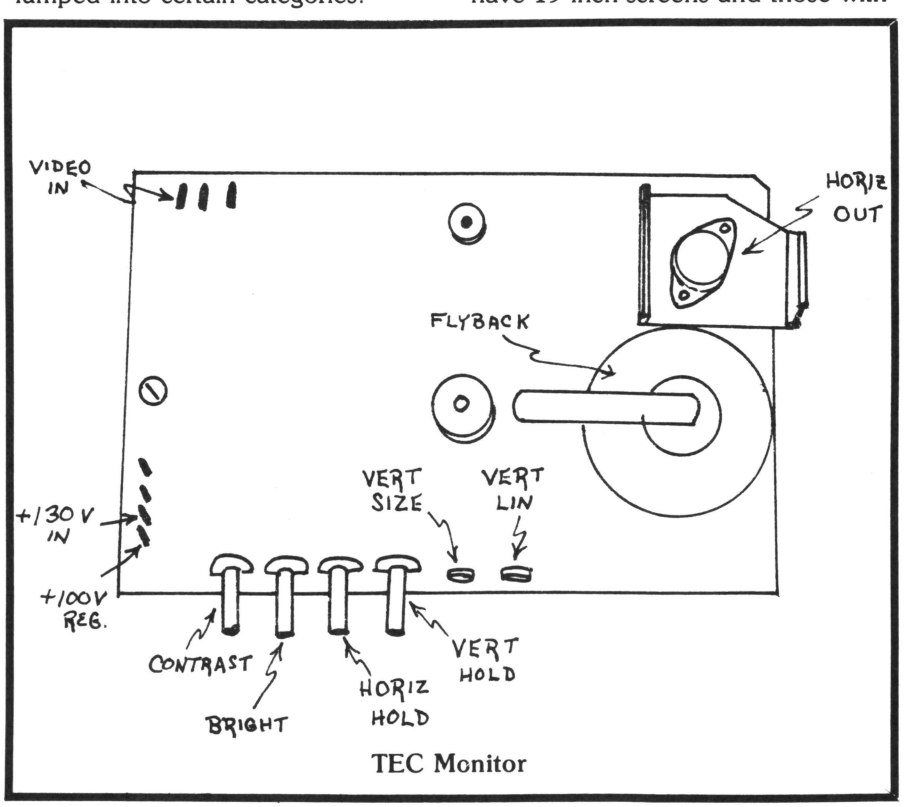
We are also seeing an increasing number of monitors by TEC, especially in Atari products. Occasionally you may run into one of Midway's homemade jobs. Recently a new monitor by Wells-Gardner has shown up and it's *almost* identical with the older Motorola, but not enough so's we can swap PCB's.

Monitors all work the same so we'll go over some general procedures and then look for convenient test points. The industry has done us a big favor; they standardized the 12 pin input connector so we can swap monitors around at will, so long as they're the same screen size. The only exception to this is the occasion where the game requires a 5-volt supply—not all monitors have them (nor do audio systems, but that situation comes up much less often).

Let's approach monitor problems symptomatically, in a trouble shooting guide...

Raster, but no picture:

1. Is there evidence of game logic (sounds, etc.)? If not, there's probably no picture being generated; find out why.
2. Do the "Pin 1" test—turn up the brightness and contrast all the way, disconnect the logic PCB, and touch pin 1 of the input connector with a metal object like a paper clip. If you see some sort of dark and light pattern on the screen, the monitor is probably OK. Look for continuity of the video lead back to the main PCB.



TEC Monitor

Dark Screen:

1. Turn brightness all the way up. If raster appears, see above. If not,
2. Look at the filament in the neck of the picture tube to see if it's lit.
3. If the neck of the tube *is* lit, listen for the high-pitched sound of the flyback transformer, if you can hear that high. If you can't hear that high, listen for the "static electricity" sound when it's first turned on. Try gently tapping the flyback with an *insulated* object. If tapping it causes anything to happen, look for loose wires underneath the flyback. Make sure you turn the unit off first. Very high voltage, y'know. (Be sure some models derive their filament voltage *from* the flyback.)
4. If the filament is not lit, check the normal stuff: AC line fuses, monitor fuses, power connectors. Check for 110 volts AC between pins 9 and 10 of the input connector.
5. If monitor fuse is blown, go ahead and insert a new one (or new ones), and if the new one blows too, pull the monitor and look for loose hardware and for blown parts, especially in the power supply section or the horizontal output transistor (It shorts).

Horizontal or vertical line only:

1. Check the yoke wires (the yoke is the "coils of wire" thing around the neck of the picture tube).
2. Note: the high voltage that lights the screen is generated in the horizontal circuits so, if the hoizontal section goes bad, the screen will *not* light. The vertical section *can* fail and still light the screen though.

Picture wrong size and/or distorted:

1. Usually these problems are a result of failure in the 73-volt supply (100-volt in TEC monitors). See test points.
2. Small picture usually means low voltage and vice versa: try the adjustment.
3. Most of these regulator circuits start with a 20 to 30 percent higher input voltage than the desired output. So if your 73-volt line shows about 100 volts (the regulator input), chances are the regulator transistor has shorted.
4. If the voltage is close or even a little low, and you have a rolling bar effect on the screen, you likely have a failure in the filter capacitor. Look for leaking white goop or even just a poor connection.

No sync:

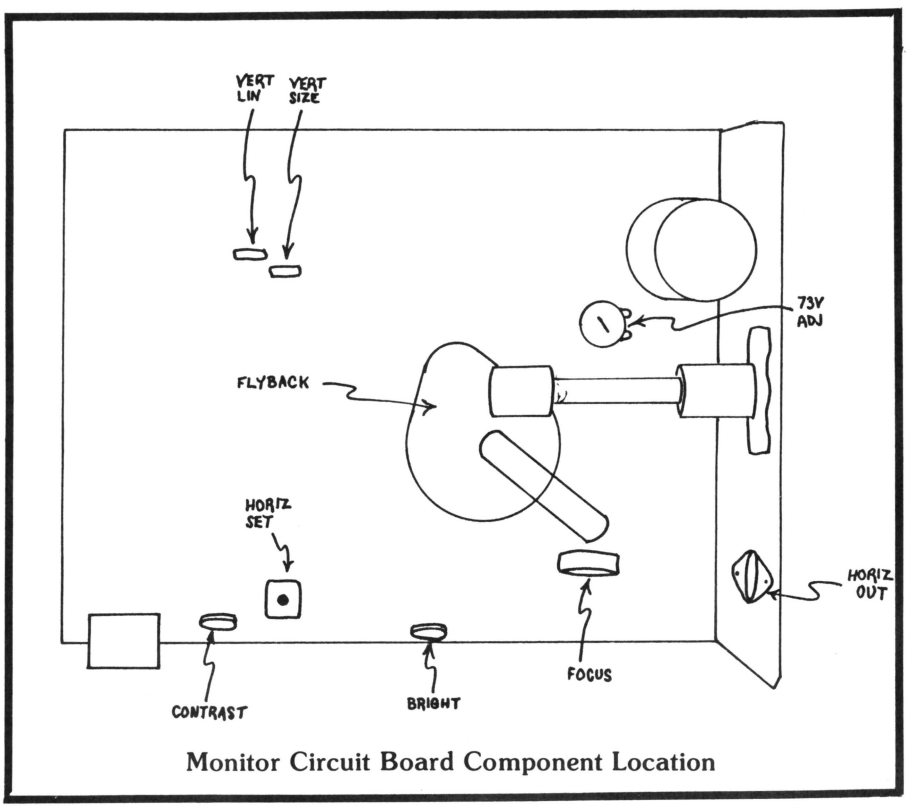
What, you might ask, is sync? Well, a video picture is made up of well defined spots along the lines of the raster, sort of like a company of marines marching along. Our marines all march to the same cadence to stay in formation. If some of the columns marched faster or slower than others, the formation would become distorted (and many potatoes would get peeled, no doubt). Likewise, if all the lines in the raster don't start at the same point our picture gets distorted. Whew!!!

In a loss of sync, the video image will be there but it won't be steady, and it'll probably be skewed at an angle. If this is the case, look for a loss of the ground between PCB and the monitor input.

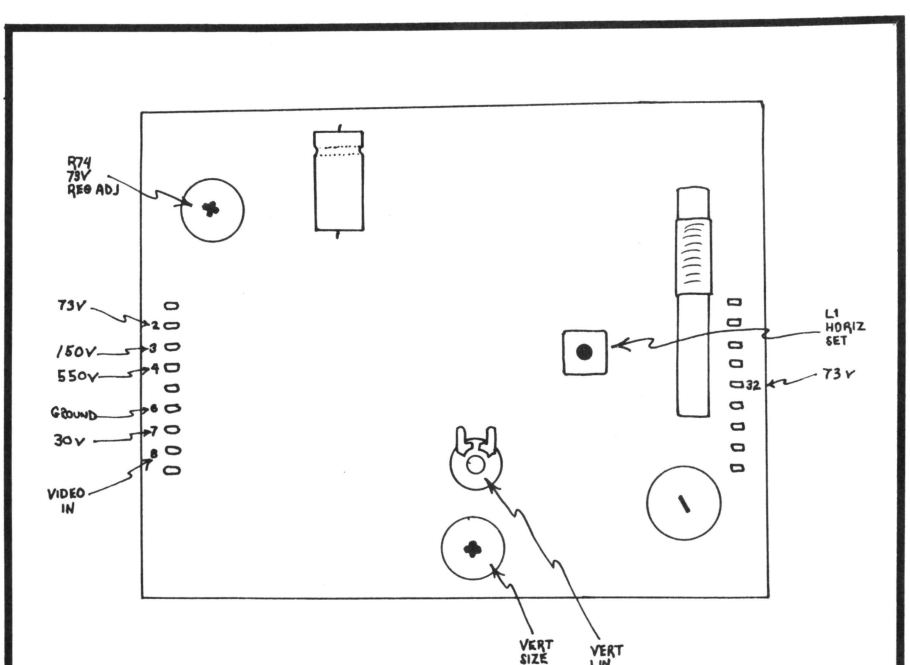
Test Points

12 pin input connector

1. video input
2. video ground
3. 5-volt supply ground
4. audio input
5. speaker out
6. +5 volts DC supply (used to power the logic PCB in some games)
7. earth ground
8. speaker out
9. 110-volt AC neutral
10. 110-volt AC hot
11. (not generally used)
12. +10.8 volts DC



Monitor Circuit Board Component Location



Monitor Panel—Component Side

Stern ROM Interchangeability

Rom Identification Number	MPU PCB Location U2	MPU PCB Location U6	GAME
	P1	P2	Pinball/Stingray
	P3	P4	Stars
	P5	P6	Memory Lane
	P7	P8	Lectronamo/Nugent
	P9	P10	Wild Fyre/Dracula
	P11	P12	Trident
	P13	P12	Hot Hand

All Stern MPU boards are interchangeable from game to game. Only the program chips in locations U2 and U6 are different.

The table identifies the ROM combination required for each game. (Note that some games share the same pair.)

Atari "Superman" memory characteristics

This game includes a battery-powered computer memory (battery-backed RAM) that remembers the game's accounting information, operator selectable Replay Levels, and the High Score to Date. Even when the AC power to the game is removed, this information is retained in this memory.

The game's microcomputer continually checks the Replay Levels and High Score to Date. If, by some error of the microcomputer, one of these scores is "blitzed," the microcomputer will reset the erroneous score to zero. Therefore, the Replay Level (or High Score to Date) in error is totally eliminated. This feature protects the operator from players getting unwarranted free games due to failure of the microcomputer.

Test number 15 of the Self-Test Procedure is named Battery Backup Error. In this test, a totally random number is displayed in the Player 1 Score Display. This number does not represent the number of failures that have occurred. It merely represents a number which should remain constant on your particular game. In other words, your game could have any number from 1 to 999,999 displayed during this test. That same number should always be displayed each time you run this test. If you discover this number has changed from the last time you ran this test, it means a battery-backed RAM failure has been experienced. Therefore, you should check the Replay Levels and the High Score to Date to see which one failed and thus had been set to zero.

Gottlieb Power Supply +5 and +60V Adjustment

Gottlieb Power Supplies on their *Countdown* pin game are factory adjusted and sealed. Should it become necessary to readjust the voltages, (+5vdc, +60vdc), the pots may have to be replaced. These power supplies are identified by red sealant paint on the potentiometers. Breaking the seal to adjust the voltage, causes the pot to be intermittent.

Especially critical is the +5vdc adjustment due to the crowbar circuit which trips at 5.6vdc.

Atari "Superman" Driver Transistors

Unlike previous Atari solenoid driver transistors, the new electronics system used in *Superman* utilizes PNP type Darlington transistors.

Some service shops have replaced the NPN type Darlington driver used in just about every electronic pin, regardless of manufacturer, with a universal driver such as SE9302, 2N6045 or TIP 120.

Obviously, this device will not function in the new Atari system, so the direct replacement must be stocked (SJE 783).

Modifying Bally PS/SD Tester to Accommodate Sound Modules

Bally now offers a modification kit to owners of the Power Supply/Solenoid Driver Test Set which enables the tester to also check Bally sound modules.

Contact your distributor for availability.

FO—607 modification of PS/SD Test Set
FO—613 sound module test procedure

This page courtesy of Star Tech Journal, Mechantiville, NJ 08109

NAMA study reveals

1978 vending profits down

The Price Waterhouse operating ratio study for the National Automatic Merchandising Association shows that vending industry profits were slightly off in 1978. A sampling of 175 NAMA firms with a combined sales volume of more than $1.6 billion participated in the survey which revealed a 1978 industry sales figure in excess of $11 billion.

Profit margins showed that operators who did less than $250,000 in retail sales were able to keep more of their revenues than any higher sales category. The operating profit for those operators was 11.8 percent of sales, whereas those whose sales ranged between $250,000 and $750,000 and those whose sales came to $10,000 or more operated at the lowest profit margin, something less than four percent.

Operating profit of all operators reporting data averaged four percent for 1978, down from 4.8 percent for 1977.

Each machine averaged $3,029 in sales, up from $2,677 in 1977.

Cigarettes again reached the top of the list in items sold through vending machines, a position they regained after being ousted from that spot by hot cup beverages in 1977. Both cigarettes and hot cup beverages declined, however, in their leading shares of the dispensed products. Partly responsible for that decline was the percentage of those products now dispensed outside of the machines, which rose significantly in 1978, from 32.9 percent in 1977 to 38.7 percent last year.

Operators participating in the NAMA survey also reported operational expenses. Labor, the most significant characteristic of the report, cost vending operators 22.7 percent of their expenses.

PROFIT ANALYSIS FOR 1978

(based on reported sales volume categories)

	Less than $ 250,000	$250,000 to $750,000	$750,000 to $1,000,000	$2,000,000 to $9,999,999	$10,000,000 Or More
Sales at retail	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Cost of sales	52.0	52.5	49.4	49.7	45.7
Total operating expenses	36.2	43.7	46.5	45.8	50.4
OPERATING PROFIT	11.8%	3.8%	4.1%	4.5%	3.9%
Less interest expenses	1.5	1.3	.9	.7	.3
Other income or charges (net)	.1	1.1	.7	.7	1.8
PROFIT BEFORE INCOME TAXES	10.4%	3.6%	3.9%	4.5%	5.4%

CALENDAR

September 15-16
North Carolina Coin Operators Association. Sheraton Center, Charlotte

October 5-6
Amusement & Music Operators of Virginia. John Marshall Hotel, Richmond

October 11-13
West Virginia Music & Vending Association. Ramada Inn, South Charleston

October 14
Deutsche Wurlitzer Distributors Meeting, Hotel Croatia, Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia

October 25-28
NAMA national convention, McCormick Place, Chicago

November 9-11
AMOA international exposition, Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago

January 18-20
Oregon Amusement & Music Operators Association. Valley River Inn, Eugene

January 18-20
Music Operators of Minnesota. Minneapolis

June 5-7
Music Operators of Texas. Flagship Hotel, Galveston

Classified

2 KEENEY CONSOLE SLOTS FROM EARLY 1940s, plus 3 more Keeneys for parts or restoration. $2500 takes all 5! Tel. 408/295-6988.

WANTED: Backglass for Bally Surfers. WAGER MUSIC COMPANY, 6404 Whittier Court, Bethesda, MD 20034. Tel. 301/320-3844.

SETTING UP ARCADE FROM THE 1930s & 1940s. Need machines from this period, also parts and cases. Have you any for sale? Contact AUTOMATIC NOVELTY CO., Tel. 312/849-4041. Roger Simale.

WILL PAY 10 to 25% ABOVE DISTRIBUTOR TRADE-IN allowances—on a regular basis—for good used pin games. Operators in Buffalo, Detroit, Erie, and Cleveland areas please send a list of games and prices to: MESSER-KIPNIS INC., P.O. Box 5069, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1N4.

I.C.C. SPITFIRE & SKY TACK PARTS. We have a complete inventory. Send for our price list. Logic Card Special $295. BILL GROSSMAN & ASSOCIATES, Box 5421, Incline Village, NV 89450.

FOR SALE: 2 Electronic Pachinko machines. Commercial coin operated 25-cents play. Original cost $1800, will sacrifice $895 each or both for $1500. A.D. VENDING CO., 215/822-7285.

WANTED: Mature experienced mechanic for coin-operated music and amusement route in North Texas. Qualifications determine salary. Call or write Jack or Daniel Bock, LOVE STAR AMUSEMENTS, 1008 Jacksboro Hwy., Wichita Falls, TX 76301. Tel. 817/767-0661.

PINBALL TOURNAMENTS: If you have a location with a minimum of 15 pinballs, please write us. PINBALL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC., 30 W. Washington, Suite 1432, Chicago, IL 60602.

D.R.A. PRICE GUIDE offers complete up to date information on price values of used equipment. For free sample ½ booklet write—DISTRIBUTORS RESEARCH, 262 NW 29th St., Miami, Fla. 33127.

FOR THE BEST IN USED FLIPPERS, VIDEO GAMES and arcade equipment at the cheapest prices see our regular ad in the classified section of PLAY METER MAGAZINE. NEW ORLEANS NOVELTY COMPANY, 1055 Dryades St., New Orleans, La. Tel. 504/529-7321.

PINBALL TOURNAMENT KITS $25, Pinball Wizard News, $10 per year. NATIONAL PINBALL WIZARD ASSOCIATION, 200 U.S. 1, Linden, NJ.

SERVICE EXPERTLY AND RELIABLY DONE ON ALL coin operated games. Boards repaired. Contract rates available. Write JACK GUARNIERI SERVICE CO., Box 155, Brooklyn, NY 11236. Tel. 212/687-5305, Beep Unit 674.

MECHANIC WANTED: Solid state, flipper games, video, and music. Pittsburgh area. Excellent benefits and wages. KAYS MUSIC CO., 300 Spruce St., Vandergrift, PA 15699.

OLD WURLITZERS FOR SALE: 2 1100 1 700, 1 616 1 P12. Will sell all as one group $1900. These are 90 percent complete. Call JUKEBOX CITY, 602/966-0732.

LOGIC BOARD SPECIALS: Mirco's Challenge or Slam $35. U.S. Marketing's Tele-Tennis $45. Meadow's Flim-Flam $55. All four $135. BILL GROSSMAN & ASSOCIATES, Box 5421, Incline Village, NV 89450.

FOR SALE: Indy 800, complete—very good condition. NEED: Midway Whirly Bird—must have sound. AUTOMATIC AMUSEMENT CO., Harold. Tel. 318/221-8507.

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